

book intro

In the 20th century, mass communications and the industrial production of culture developed faster and further in North America and West Europe. Many of the problems and possibilities of industrial/commercial mass culture became issues for individuals and institutions.

In the 60s and 70s a new radical analysis of mass culture developed in the capitalist core countries: first in the area of cinema and then branching out to television and the other mass media, popular music, and related cultural practices.

This new analysis drew on an older marxist and politically radical tradition. But it also drew on the insights of revived and new social-political movements: feminist, gay, Black, latino, and other minority movements, national independence and liberation movements.

This new analysis broke with the previously dominant model of radical cultural analysis.

The older issue of realism was displaced by a concern with representation.

by analyzing this intellectual development we can see the common features as well as certain differences. There can be no doubt, however, that this is a genuine new direction in the left, within marxism.

as such it has implications for many aspects of marxist thought: political economy, ideology, social policy, political issues.

it is not yet recognized internationally within the left but it is an important development because the current export of culture by the US does shape other cultures, particularly much of Latin America.